

APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR COLORING SKIN

TECHNICAL FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to the field of cosmetics and, more particularly, to an apparatus and method for coloring skin.

BACKGROUND

One of the main problems with respect to a person's hair is sometimes the lack of it. Typically, the aging of a person brings upon thinning hair or, especially in males, a receding hairline or bald spots in which the person's scalp is exposed. In addition, a person may suffer accident or disease that causes thinning hair or bald spots or requires treatment (such as chemotherapy) that causes these effects. Loss of a person's hair can be very embarrassing and can cause the person to suffer a lack of confidence in their appearance and to refrain from going out in public.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In one embodiment, an apparatus for coloring skin includes a base and a number of skin coloring elements configured to couple to the base and extend therefrom. Each skin coloring element includes a coloring agent disposed proximate
5 a free end thereof. The coloring agents are adapted to color a desired area of the skin when directed over the desired area of the skin through movement of the apparatus substantially parallel to the skin.

Particular embodiments of the invention may provide one or more technical advantages. For example, certain embodiments may provide a brush that facilitates
10 the coloring of a person's scalp to camouflage thinning hair, receding hair lines, bald spots, and the like. Elongated coloring elements associated with the brush, each having a coloring agent at a free end thereof, may be directed through the hair with a suitable brushing motion that ensures the coloring agents are brought into contact with the person's scalp in order to color desired portions of the scalp. In certain
15 embodiments, the elongated coloring elements are individually interchangeable so that different colors and color combinations may be utilized in order to match a person's hair color. In certain embodiments, the shape of the "brushing" portion of the brush may also be manipulated depending on the portion of the scalp that needs to be treated. In certain embodiments, both sides of the brush may include the elongated
20 coloring elements so that both side of the brush may be utilized according to particular needs.

Certain embodiments may provide all, some, or none of these advantages. Certain embodiments may provide one or more other technical advantages, one or more of which may be readily apparent to those skilled in the art from the figures,
25 descriptions, and claims included herein.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a more complete understanding of the invention, and for further features and advantages, reference is now made to the following description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

5 FIGURE 1 is a perspective view illustrating an example apparatus for coloring skin;

FIGURES 2A and 2B are views illustrating example attachment of elongated coloring elements to a base of the apparatus illustrated in FIGURE 1; and

10 FIGURES 3A and 3B are perspective and elevation views, respectively, illustrating an example method of coloring a person's scalp.

DESCRIPTION OF EXAMPLE EMBODIMENTS

Example embodiments of the present invention and their advantages are best understood by referring now to FIGURES 1 through 3B of the drawings, in which like numerals refer to like parts.

5 FIGURE 1 is a perspective view illustrating an example apparatus 100, such as a brush, for coloring a scalp. Although the following description discusses the utilization of brush 100 to color a scalp, the present invention contemplates coloring other parts of a body using brush 100. In addition, although the following description discusses the utilization of brush 100 to treat a scalp of a human, the present invention
10 contemplates coloring skins of animals using brush 100.

 Although brush 100 may have many functions, in one embodiment the primary function of brush 100 is to color a person's scalp. People, especially men, may have thinning hair, receding hairlines, bald spots, and the like. This is often embarrassing and makes a person self-conscious. Therefore, in one embodiment,
15 brush 100 functions to color a person's scalp in order to camouflage thinning hair, receding hairlines, bald spots, and the like in order to enhance the person's appearance.

 In the illustrated embodiment, brush 100 includes a base 102 having a handle 104 that may be formed integral with base 102 or be a separate element from base 102
20 and attached to base 102 in any suitable manner. Base 102 includes a plurality of apertures 105 formed therein that are configured to accept a plurality of skin coloring elements 106 therein. Each skin coloring element 106 has a coloring agent 108 disposed at its free end.

 Base 102 and handle 104 may be formed from any suitable material and may
25 be formed in any suitable shape. For example, base 102 and handle 104 may be formed from plastic, rubber, or wood. In the illustrated embodiment, base 102 and handle 104 are in the general shape of a brush; however, base 102 and handle 104 may take the form of a comb or may have any other suitable configuration. It is preferable that handle 104 be long enough to accept a person's hand thereon so that
30 the person may utilize brush 100 in a manner that directs skin coloring elements 106 over the person's skin.

Skin coloring elements 106 may be coupled to base 102 in any suitable manner. Two such methods of coupling skin coloring elements 106 to base 102 are described below with reference to FIGURES 2A and 2B. Although twelve skin coloring elements 106 are illustrated in FIGURE 1 extending from a first side 109 of
5 base 102 in a generally staggered pattern, any suitable number of skin coloring elements 106 may be coupled to base 102 and may be arranged in any suitable configuration. Skin coloring elements 106 may also extend from a second side 111 of base 102 so that the user is able to utilize both sides of brush 100 as desired. For example, if coloring agents 108 on skin coloring elements 106 on first side 109 of
10 base 102 are not working properly, are dull, or are a different color than desired, then a user can flip brush 100 over and utilize skin coloring elements 106 extending from second side 111.

In one embodiment, skin coloring elements 106 resemble conventional eyebrow pencils having coloring agents 108 disposed within their core and may be
15 sharpened in a conventional manner when coloring agents 108 become dull. In one embodiment, skin coloring elements 106 are adapted to be selectively removable from base 102, as described in more detail below with reference to FIGURES 2A and 2B. Skin coloring elements 106 may extend from base 102 any suitable length and skin coloring elements may have any suitable shape. Typically, skin coloring elements
20 106 are generally circular in cross-section and extend from either first side 109 or second side 111 of base 102 approximately 0.5-1.5 inches.

Coloring agent 108 may be any suitable material adapted to color the skin. In a particular embodiment, coloring agent 108 is formed from a suitable combination of the following materials: hydrogenated coconut oil, hydrogenated coco-glycerides,
25 hydrogenated tallow, cetyl esters, carnauba wax, paraffin, castor oil, lanolin, isopropyl myristate, methylparaben, propylparaben, bht, iron oxides, manganese violet, ferric ammonium ferrocyanide, titanium dioxide, ultramarines, mica, chromium, hydrogenated green, and aluminum powder. In addition, coloring agent 108 may be any suitable color and may have any suitable characteristics (e.g., metallic, glossy,
30 etc.). In this manner, coloring agents 108 may be matched to a person's hair in order to enhance the camouflaged appearance of the thinning hair, receding hairline, bald spot, or the like. Although coloring agent 108 is illustrated as having a generally

conical shape, coloring agent 108 may have any suitable configuration depending on the form of skin coloring elements 106. Coloring agent 108 may be coupled to the free ends of skin coloring elements 106 in any suitable manner. Since coloring agents 108 are utilized to color and change the appearance of the skin, it is important that the type of chemical or material used for coloring agents 108 be safe for the skin. In a particular embodiment where skin coloring elements 106 are utilized to color a person's scalp, it is important that coloring agents 108 be safe for the scalp. For example, many chemicals used for dying or otherwise coloring a person's hair may be irritating or harmful to the scalp. It is important that these types of chemicals not be used for coloring agents 108.

FIGURES 2A and 2B are cross-sectional views illustrating example attachment of skin coloring elements 106 to base 102. The coupling methods illustrated in FIGURES 2A and 2B are only two examples of a myriad of coupling methods contemplated by the present invention for coupling skin coloring elements 106 to base 102. For example, instead of those shown in FIGURES 2A and 2B, a threaded attachment method may be utilized in which a threaded end of skin coloring element 106 is rotated to engage corresponding threads in base 102.

In the embodiment illustrated in FIGURE 2A, a single skin coloring element 106 is shown coupled to base 102 near a center portion of skin coloring element 106. In this embodiment, skin coloring element 106 includes coloring agents 108 at each of its ends. In order to couple skin coloring element 106 to base 102 in this embodiment, skin coloring element 106 includes one or more protrusions 200 disposed around a perimeter thereof that engages one or more grooves 202 formed within aperture 105 of base 102. In this manner, skin coloring element 106 may be "snapped" into place in order to couple skin coloring element 106 to base 102. Both protrusion 200 and groove 202 may have any suitable size and configuration in order to facilitate the engagement of protrusion 200 in groove 202. In this embodiment, the adequacy of the engagement of protrusion 200 in groove 202 should be such that a user is able to insert skin coloring element 106 into base 102 without undue effort while allowing enough stability to assure that skin coloring 106 stays coupled to base 102 when a user is using brush 100 and coloring agent 108 is pressed against the skin.

In the embodiment illustrated in FIGURE 2B, there exist two separate skin coloring elements 106 extending from either side of base 102. In this manner, a user may remove one of the skin coloring elements 106 on one side of base 102 while keeping intact the other skin coloring element 106 on the other side of base 102. The coupling method illustrated in FIGURE 2B is similar to the one in FIGURE 2A where a "snap" type connection is utilized via one or more protrusions 201 disposed around a perimeter of each skin coloring element 106 that engage one or more grooves 203 formed in aperture 105 of base 102. Similar to protrusion 200 and groove 202 of FIGURE 2A, protrusion 201 and groove 203 of FIGURE 2B may have any suitable size and configuration to facilitate the insertion and removal of skin coloring elements 106.

FIGURES 3A and 3B are perspective and elevation views, respectively, illustrating an example method of coloring a person's scalp 300. In the illustrated embodiment, scalp 300 includes a bald spot 302 surrounded by hair 304. A user or other person's hand 308 grips handle 104 of brush 100 and positions skin coloring elements 106 on one side of base 102 over bald spot 302 in order to color scalp 300. In this embodiment, the coloring of scalp 300 causes bald spot 302 to substantially resemble hair 304 in color in order to camouflage bald spot 302. As illustrated best in FIGURE 3B, the user places coloring agents 108 of skin coloring elements 106 on one side of brush 100 in contact with bald spot 302 in order to transfer some of the coloring agent 108 to scalp 300 in order to camouflage bald spot 302. The user manipulates brush 100 in order to cover as much of bald spot 302 as desired and as thoroughly as desired. Because of their elongated nature, skin coloring elements 106 easily pass through hair 304 to avoid tangling. If, during the course of coloring scalp 300, coloring agents 108 become dull or unusable for some reason, in one embodiment, the user may simply remove brush 100 from scalp 300 and either flip brush 100 over and use skin coloring elements 106 on the other side of brush 100 or sharpen or replace one or more skin coloring elements 106. In addition, the user may want to replace one or more skin coloring elements 106 to achieve a different color or color combination or may want to remove one or more skin coloring elements 106 depending on the shape and location of bald spot 302. For example, the user may

want to remove one or more skin coloring elements 106 to avoid contact between skin coloring elements 106 and hair 304.

Although embodiments of the invention and some of their advantages are described in detail, a person skilled in the art could make various alterations, additions, and omissions without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention as defined by the appended claims.